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ABSTRACT

Ohio's use of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) 8 percent set-aside has been noted as exemplary. The first half of this report reviews the national literature on 8 percent JTPA programs, then discusses Ohio's State Education Coordination and Grants Advisory Council (SECGAC), unique among state administrative mechanisms. It notes that SECGAC has developed and publicized a consistent policy regarding how 8 percent funds should and should not be used. The second half of the report contains brief sketches of 19 exemplary programs in three groups corresponding to the three paths along which Ohio allocates the money: 80 percent by formula to the 30 JTPA service delivery agencies for long-term training; 20 percent of that 80 percent to four state departments to help institutionalized people make the transition to the world of work; and the remaining 20 percent as seed money for linkage and coordination activities. The study concludes that the Ohio efforts are sincere, systematic, and creative efforts to use 8 percent funds for their intended purpose: to foster cooperation among agencies serving those who need training for employment. The study recommended that other states copy Ohio's example and that the federal government do less in such programs in terms of regulations. (12 references) (KC)

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THE EIGHT PERCENT DIVIDEND

EXEMPLARY JTPA/VOCATIONAL EDUCATION "EIGHT PERCENT" PROJECTS

OHIO COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
FY-1991

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ohio's use of the JTPA eight percent set-aside has been called "one of the best-kept secrets" in the state's education and training sphere. The present study, it is hoped, will let the secret out, for that is the best way for exemplary eight-percent-funded programs to achieve their widest application and yield the highest return on the set-aside's investment.

The report, which was written by Researcher Frieda Douthitt, reviews the national literature, then discusses Ohio's State Education Coordination and Grants Advisory Council (SECGAC), unique among the state administrative mechanisms. SECGAC has developed and publicized a consistent policy regarding how 8% funds should and should not be used. For example, such funds may be used for innovation, coordination, and helping institutionalized persons make a transition to the world of work. Such funds may not be used to supplant or supplement existing local efforts. The advisory council's recommendations are implemented by the Job Training Partnership Service of the Department of Education Division of Vocational and Career Education.

The second half of the report is devoted to brief sketches of 19 exemplary programs in three groups corresponding to the three paths along which Ohio allocates the money: 80 percent by formula to the 30 JTPA service delivery agencies for long-term training; 20 percent of that 80 percent to four state departments to help institutionalized people make the transfer to the world of work; and the remaining 20 percent as seed money for linkage and coordination activities.

The study concludes that, while the occasional project may "fall through the cracks," or become a victim of turf wars, or operate in isolation, the overall impression is of sincere, systematic, and creative efforts to use eight percent funds for their intended purpose: **to foster cooperation among agencies serving those who need training for employment.**

A SIGNIFICANT COMMONALITY: JTPA AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) provides federal funds for training for employment and support services to economically disadvantaged citizens. Enacted in 1982 and amended in 1986, JTPA has its roots in earlier federal efforts to retrain workers dislocated by technological change (the Manpower Development and Training Act of 1962) and to prepare underemployed populations for full-time, permanent employment (the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964). It replaced the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) of the 1970s, with some differences intended to correct a perceived imbalance toward government as "employer of last resort" -- more emphasis on training, private sector involvement, and state-level responsibility.[1]

In asserting a federal role in training for employment, JTPA is also an heir of the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, the first vocational education legislation. In the intervening decades, federal vocational funding has evolved gradually in the direction of JTPA.[2] The recent reauthorization of the law providing federal funding for vocational education, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education and Applied Technology Act of 1990, continues that direction. Allocations to public school systems reflect the incidence of economically disadvantaged and handicapped populations.

"These set-asides have significant commonality with the eligible population under JTPA," writes Michael Brustein, a Washington, D.C. attorney who specializes in vocational education, in a study exploring legal and fiscal incompatibilities between the two systems.[3] "With both these systems concerned about helping the disadvantaged and the dislocated prepare for and obtain jobs, it is obvious they should work together."

A Carrot for Coordination

It was obvious to the designers of the legislation, too. JTPA's predecessor laws simply mandated coordination with vocational education. JTPA was the first federal jobs training legislation to designate a portion of the funding specifically to foster cooperation.

JTPA Title II, Section 123, stipulates that eight percent of the total be set aside:

> (1) To provide services for eligible participants through cooperative agreements between [the] state education agency or agencies, administrative entities in service delivery areas in the state, (where appropriate) local educational agencies, and
>
> (2) To facilitate coordination of education and training services for eligible participants through such cooperative agreements.[4]

One authority on JTPA and its eight percent set-aside believes that "the concern with coordination is first and foremost a response to fear of duplication and waste"[5] and concludes that the fear is unrealistic. Despite the lack of specific guidelines in the legislation as to how the eight percent funds should be used, Grubb et al. "found relatively little evidence of duplication; the common fear that vocational education and JTPA programs duplicate each other seems unfounded." [emphasis theirs]

On the contrary, there is evidence of a high degree of cooperation. The National Alliance of Business reported that 95 percent of JTPA service delivery areas (SDAs) have some financial agreement with a provider of vocational education.[6] Moreover, "[i]n contrast to the common assertion that simple ignorance about other programs is widespread, [Grubb] found an abundance of personal contacts between vocational educators and JTPA administrators in most of the communities . . . visited."[7]

Morgan Lewis' second annual report on the state of cooperative activity between the two systems announces similarly positive findings:

> Ninety-seven percent of the SDAs in this country engaged in some type of collaborative effort with public vocational education institutions during the program year that ended in June 1987.
>
> Ninety-one percent of the SDA administrators described their relationship with public vocational/technical programs as satisfactory or better. Seventy-one percent described the relationship as good, very good, or excellent.
>
> Almost 90 percent of the postsecondary institutions in the study have some relationship with JTPA. Sixty-eight percent provide direct services and an additional 19 percent provide facilities or instructors for JTPA programs they do not conduct themselves.[8]

A further and perhaps unlooked-for benefit of the eight percent set-aside has been innovation — perhaps because the use of the money has not been prescribed in detail. Grubb commented that "[a]lmost all of the innovative efforts we have seen have included 8-percent funds, and most of them would not exist without that program."[9] Grubb and his co-researchers found innovation particularly at the local level, "where the amount of creativity, entrepreneurship, and doggedness in searching for solutions to the education and training needs of various groups is quite impressive."[10]

An earlier study of the extent of vocational education and JTPA cooperation at the state level also commented on the unique role of the JTPA eight percent. In a mail survey of state staff of both agencies, Morgan V. Lewis, Marilyn Ferguson, and Michael Card found that "[t]he eight percent funds were generally reported to have provided services that otherwise would not have been available."[11]

Contested Turf

Nevertheless, there are sticking points between the two systems that militate against the set-aside's mission of cooperation and collaboration. One is the issue of "turf," which Lewis, Ferguson, and Card reported in their first annual report as the biggest obstacle to coordination. "Since JTPA is intended to make mainline institutions more responsive to the needs of underserved individuals, turf concerns are inevitable," they wrote.[12]

Again, in his second annual report, Lewis spoke of a "high level of consensus among all respondents on the factors that have most seriously hindered efforts to increase coordination — turf issues. This term is almost always encountered in discussions of interagency relations. It refers to the tendency of a bureaucracy to defend its authority and autonomy."[13]

However, another Lewis study, of factors helping and hindering vocational education/JTPA cooperation, indicates that JTPA administrators think turf is less of an issue. They ranked it third among detrimental factors, after performance-based contracts and lack of emphasis on placement. "These results stand in sharp contrast to much of the public discussion on vocational education/JTPA relationships," wrote Lewis and co-author Belle Chen.[14]

Brustein pointed out that "turf" may be overblown as a negative factor, merely camouflaging a far more serious systemic flaw: "[T]here are provisions in the laws and federal agency practices which are possibly creating such chilling effects on the activities of responsible public administrators that what appears to be concern over 'turf' may well be intelligent hesitancy to become involved with administrative complexities and potential costs beyond the value of the coordinated activity."[15] Brustein's thesis is that the governing statutes themselves contain conflicting definitions, fiscal requirements, eligibility standards, and accountability requirements that discourage cooperation. Further, he found, there is no single source available to the local administrator that contains all the legal requirements that apply to both programs. These, plus the lack of synchrony among local administrative boundaries and program and fiscal years, pose formidable barriers to cooperation.

More Than Semantic Squabbles

Despite their areas of overlap, JTPA's and vocational education's target populations are distinct. The vocational educator defines disadvantage in economic and academic terms, whereas the JTPA administrator understands the term to mean solely the economically disadvantaged.[16] The training-for-employment administrator and the vocational educator define training differently. To the former, training includes basic skills and job-seeking and job-holding skills as well as specific job skills, whereas vocational education is seen by its practitioners as not training but education.

> Such a [vocational] program does not prepare a student for a specific job but for an occupational area which can lead to many related jobs. These are more than semantic squabbles. They reflect basic differences in outlook that lie at the heart of many of the difficulties in coordinating education and training with vocational education.[17]

JTPA's chief measure of accountability is the number of persons placed in jobs as a result of the program. "Many [JTPA] administrators seem so preoccupied with the specific performance standards imposed by Congress that they have neglected other possible outcomes. As a result, JTPA appears to be performance-conscious, but not especially outcome-oriented," wrote Grubb.[18]

Eight percent funds are exempt from the JTPA cost-per-entered-employment standard. They are intended to fund longer-term, more in-depth learning than JTPA operations typically afford. Yet, according to Lewis, Ferguson, and Card, schools that provide services to JTPA clients "are held to the same standards the administering entity must meet. This contributes to the perception among vocational educators that JTPA is trying to tell it how to run its programs. Some schools simply refuse to enter into performance-based contracts."[19] The difference comes down to a "basic disagreement on how best to serve individuals with serious barriers to employment. . . ."

> Most vocational educators feel these individuals need fairly long-term training programs that provide in-depth knowledge of an occupational area in which future career shifts can be made. Vocational educators tend to be skeptical of the value of much of the on-the-job training JTPA participants receive. In the opinion of vocational educators, JTPA participants could have gotten many of the jobs on their own, and the training contracts are mainly subsidies to employers. . . .
>
> JTPA officials, for their part, question the value of much of the training that vocational education provides. Often, they claim, it is not relevant to the needs of the labor market, and students cannot find jobs after completing the training. They further contend that even if the training is appropriate, few JTPA clients can afford the loss of income that long-term, full-time training requires.[20]

This disharmony will no doubt be felt more keenly as the Family Support Act of 1988 gives both vocational education and JTPA responsibility for welfare-to-work programs. The types of services that many of these clients require in addition to education — services like assessment, remediation, counseling, child care, transportation, placement — are not the natural domain of educational agencies. Nevertheless, Grubb reports that existing welfare-to-work programs have made extensive use of education and job training resources.[21]

Increasing need for job training services can only lead to the perception of more duplication of services and greater need for coordination, even though an examination of the facts does not support the former, and the eight percent set-aside is effectively supplying the latter. As Grubb and his co-writers have expressed it:

> The process of proliferation [of education and training programs] has contributed to the sense of a system out of control, one that includes more and more specialized institutions with different purposes, clients, and methods, which, in turn, creates increased pressure for coordination and collaboration. . . .

But as long as the current system falls short of the ideal, then a sense of incoherence and fragmentation will persist — not because coordination and collaboration are inadequate, but because the services available are themselves insufficient for the task at hand. . . .

These problems and paradoxes fall most heavily on the shoulders of those who operate local work-related education and training programs, who must juggle urgent but contradictory demands with dwindling resources under mounting pressure to accomplish small miracles.[22]

COMPLEXITY AND COLLABORATION IN OHIO

A first look at the state of collaboration between JTPA and vocational/technical education in Ohio confirms Grubb's description of a complex of systems that, if not out of control, surely presents a high potential for duplication and overlap. Yet that very plurality multiplies the opportunities for collaboration and raises the chances that "small miracles" are taking place. A closer inspection shows that indeed they are.

Several Ohio eight percent projects have received national recognition. One that has been highlighted in the national studies is the Career Assessment and Counseling Center (CACC) at Clark Technical College, Springfield. In 1985, JTPA-funded Individualized Training (IT) became part of Clark Tech, "where JTPA funds were once disdained. Now, both entities are more flexible with each other and concerned with meeting the needs of clients often in areas that may not be reflected in performance standards."[23]

Ohio's Project Work-Able, a collaborative effort between the Western Reserve Psychiatric Hospital and Goodwill Industries of Akron, received a 1989 JTPA Presidential Award from the U.S. Department of Labor. Project Work-Able uses a supported-employment model to provide training, access to employment opportunities, and on-the-job supportive services to persons with chronic mental illness and other disabilities.

Jobs for Ohio's Graduates (JOG) is a school-to-work transition program for at-risk high school seniors. In 1989, JOG won two of the seven awards presented by Jobs for American's Graduates (JAG); in 1990, JOG received the Chairman's Award for Greatest Improvement in Contract Hours, and JOG-Columbus received the Chairman's Award for Greatest Improvement in Hourly Wages. The Children's Defense Fund named it one of three successful state initiatives for school-to-work transition. JOG was selected for inclusion in the National Dropout Prevention Center's Program Profiles in both 1989 and 1990. In addition, Juan Cruz, a Toledo JOG student, was recognized by President Bush as one of 10 outstanding JTPA youth in America.

Communicating the Vision

Though singled out for honors, these programs are by no means singular among Ohio efforts funded by the JTPA eight percent funds. Instead they are representative of a wide array of activities going on in all parts of the state under the guidance of the State Education Coordination and Grants Advisory Council implemented by the Job Training Partnership Service (JTPS) in the Department of Education, Division of Vocational and Career Education. The programs' success appears to be owing in large part to the integrity of this administrative framework.

Finding little duplication between vocational education and JTPA programs, Grubb and his co-researchers in their more recent study turned to the effectiveness of coordination efforts. They found that there are "many steps states can take to enhance coordination, quite apart from those required by federal regulations. One is to enunciate an overall state vision of vocational education and job training . . . and bend both programs to that vision."[24] This Ohio has done.

SECGAC, a Model of Cooperation

The advisory body, SECGAC, is a unique creation. Since Ohio has two state agencies responsible for education and training (the Department of Education and the Board of Regents), the executives of these agencies were asked in early 1983 to jointly fashion a proposal for the administration of the JTPA coordination set-aside. Their proposal contained the recommendation that the governor appoint a state JTPA Education Coordination and Grants Advisory Council, which he did, comprising the heads of the Board of Regents, the Bureau of Employment Services, the Office of Budget and Management, and the departments of education and development and representatives of the governor's office, the Ohio Employment and Training Administrators Association, the Ohio Job Training Coordinating Council, and the private sector.[25]

Considered unique among state JTPA set-aside coordinating bodies, SECGAC serves as a model for coordination at other levels. The mere fact that representatives of so many diverse state agencies and groups can come together and articulate how Ohio should spend its share of the JTPA set-aside gives SECGAC recommendations the weight of policy with every audience from the governor's office down. The official policy-

setting entity, the OJTCC, consistently approves SECGAC's recommendations for the eight percent set-aside. SECGAC's example invalidates the old excuse that groups can't work together "because we've never done it that way before."

SECGAC commits eight percent funds to two priorities -- training and coordination -- in three funding components:

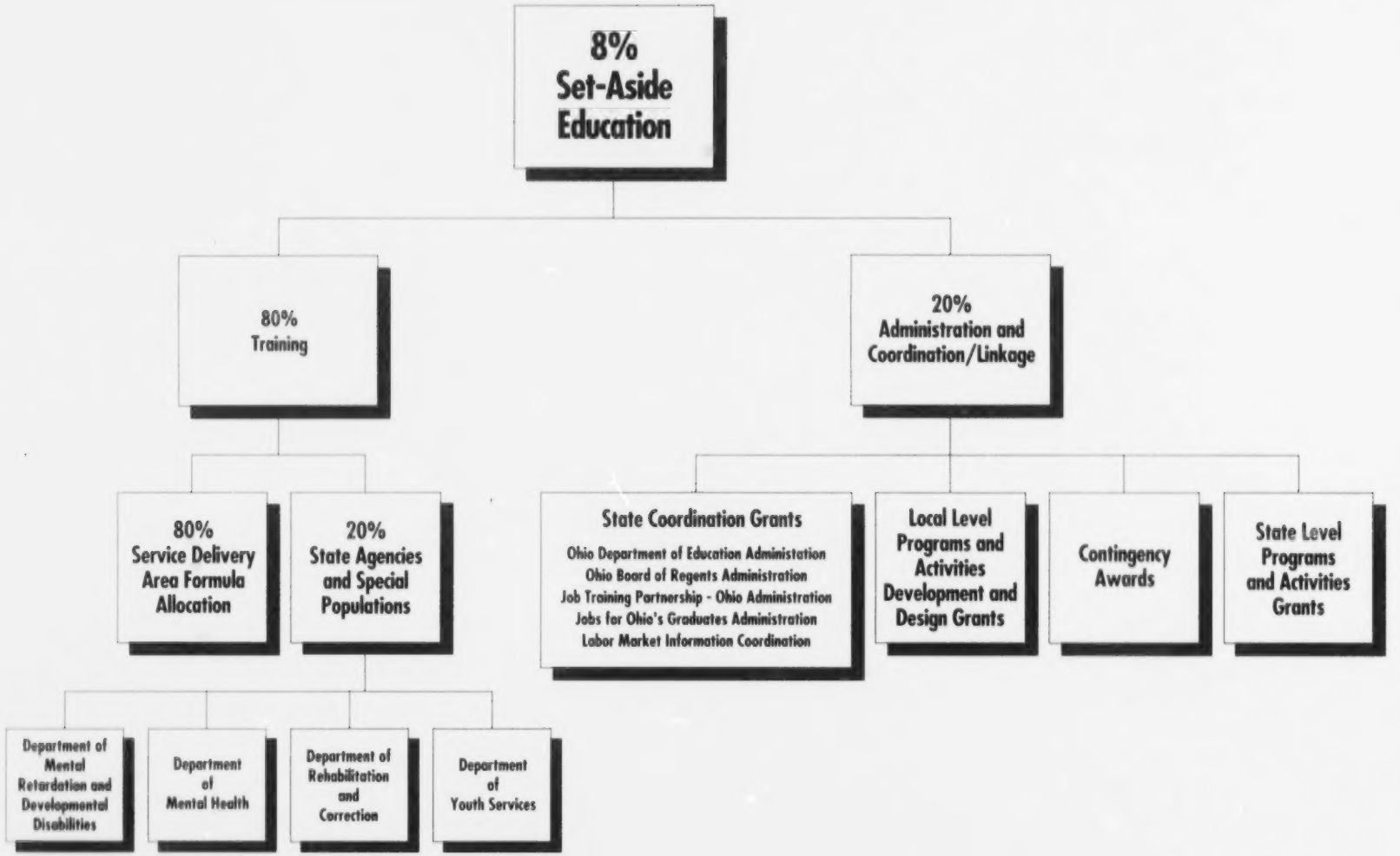
1. Eighty percent of the eight percent money goes for training. Eighty percent of this amount flows by formula to Ohio's 30 SDAs, earmarked for long-term adult training.

2. Twenty percent of the eighty percent goes to four state departments -- Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Youth Services, and Corrections and Rehabilitation -- to help institutionalized persons return to the world of work.

3. Twenty percent of the total is for coordination and is allocated in response to RFPs. (This division of funds is illustrated on the next page.)

Following the Formula in PY 89

Ohio's JTPA eight percent spending has been consistent with SECGAC's priorities -- training and coordination. Eight percent program funds are awarded to public educational institutions, JTPA SDA grant recipients, and state-supported agencies for special populations. The Ohio Department of Education Division of Vocational and Career Education provides matching money. For Program Year '89 (that is, from July 1, 1989 to June 30, 1990), Ohio's eight percent allotment totaled $8,625,170. Eighty percent of that total, or approximately $6.9 million, was designated for training services, while the remaining 20 percent was earmarked for coordination and linkage. Eighty percent of the 80 percent, or approximately $5.5 million, went to Ohio's 30 SDAs for programs that included long-term occupational training, dropout prevention, literacy, and school-to-work transition programs for a total of 3,762 participants. Twenty percent of the 80 percent, or approximately $1.4 million, went to the departments of Rehabilitation and Correction, Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, and Youth Services for programs designed to ease the transition from institution to work; 2,611 youth and adult clients of the four agencies were served.


8% Set-Aside Education
80% Training
20% Administration and Coordination/Linkage
80% Service Delivery Area Formula Allocation
20% State Agencies and Special Populations
State Coordination Grants
Ohio Department of Education Administation
Ohio Board of Regents Administration
Job Training Partnership - Ohio Administration
Jobs for Ohio's Graduates Administration
Labor Market Information Coordination
Local Level Programs and Activities Development and Design Grants
Contingency Awards
State Level Programs and Activities Grants
Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
Department of Mental Health
Department of Rehabilitation and Correction
Department of Youth Services

8% EDUCATIONAL SET-ASIDE FUNDING FLOW CHART

Twenty percent of the total allotment, over $1.7 million, funded coordination and linkage efforts through 32 grants for work in the areas of welfare-to-work, at-risk and high-risk youth, literacy, clerical displacement, elder-care worker training, and school-college partnerships.[26] These are not client-based dollars but seed money. Most of the coordination and linkage projects are funded only once. Proof of their success is that most are continued under local funding.

A sampling of all three types of eight percent programs makes up the remainder of this report.

EXEMPLARY EIGHT PERCENT PROGRAMS IN OHIO

EIGHTY PERCENT FOR TRAINING

Eighty percent of the eight percent money goes for training. Eighty percent of this amount flows by formula to Ohio's 30 SDAs, earmarked for long-term adult training. Many of these service delivery agencies are Private Industry Councils (PICs); some are agencies of city or county government. Their priorities differ, as do their service areas—from rural multi-county composites to single counties dominated by major metropolitan centers—but successful programs work with their clients, the schools, and other community resources to get the most out of their long-term training dollars. They assess clients to make sure they can sustain themselves for the time involved in long-term training; they analyze local job markets to see where the areas of need are; they work with local employers to develop job opportunities; they leverage eight percent funds against other money sources. Above all, close ties with local educational institutions, particularly at the instructor-case worker level, enable them to deliver training effectively.

A major metro SDA concentrates on hard-to-serve populations. Cincinnati's eight percent-funded long-term training program is operated by a division of city government in concert with the adult education department of the Cincinnati Public Schools. The money is used to diagnose and remediate the academic deficiencies of clients who may have high school diplomas but still do not read or write well enough to enter two-year skill training. Many of the individuals served need to be brought up to speed in basic skills or get a GED before they can enroll in programs such as LPN, machine trades, or account clerk. Many of these students can get most of their training dollars from Pell grants. Eight percent funds make up the difference. This SDA makes a major effort to leverage eight percent money against other funding sources in order to maximize the number of people it can serve (now about 300–400 per year in vocational education alone).

A multi-county, mid-state PIC makes common cause with schools. The director of a five-county PIC in rural central Ohio credits close ties with area schools for program success. Most of Circleville PIC's eight percent money buys training at Pickaway-Ross and Eastland vocational schools, but some also goes to JOG (Jobs for Ohio's Graduates, a dropout prevention program) in each of the five counties the PIC serves. Two JTPA staff members are assigned to the vocational schools to identify dropouts and help them re-enter school in adult programs. Thanks to close vocational/JTPA linkages, most of a non-eight-percent literacy grant went for a PAL lab (Principles for Adult Literacy, an IBM computer-interactive learning system) in one of the vocational schools. The same thing happened with the $85,000 incentive bonus that the PIC and Pickaway-Ross Vocational School won for exemplary coordination and linkage; most of it was used to buy equipment and start a new program at the school.

Area schools contract with the PIC for displaced homemaker, ONOW (Orientation to Nontraditional Occupations for Women), self-directed job search, job club and other training programs that make up between 55 and 60 percent of their adult full-time program funding. It's a symbiotic system that works well. "We've got a lot of things built-in together," says the director. "That gives us a pretty good stake in making sure that we both do well."

In addition, PIC staff members serve on the schools' advisory committees; they participate in North Central accrediting and PRIDE reviews. The director considers job development part of his job. He works closely with local business people to place students, and he helped rewrite the Ohio vocational adult education supervisors' manual to include that responsibility. A current campaign is to bring LPN training to the local area. It's urgently needed; trained practical nurses have a 95 percent placement rate, but the closest programs are at Columbus and Nelsonville, and the latter has a year-and-a-half wait for a candidate who has passed the pre-test.

Assessment is a critical component in Columbus. You don't want to waste eight percent money on people who won't finish the training. That is the thinking behind the emphasis on client assessment at Columbus PIC. The SDA conducts its eight percent program with Columbus State Community College, Columbus Public Schools' career centers, and Eastland Vocational School, accessing a variety of programs from six weeks to two years. Many programs are held in the afternoon or evening, which helps married parents juggle jobs and day care with training. But it takes commitment as well as resources to sustain a person or a family in a two-year training effort. That is why the assessment process involves not only skill levels but self awareness.

At Columbus State, JTPA clients are integrated into the two-year student body, and the stigma of public assistance is removed. The Columbus PIC also works closely with school financial aid officers to tap other grant sources—an aggressive effort that has produced a nearly 50 percent savings in the most recent program year.

Personal attention, labor market analysis improve small-county SDA's odds. A one-county agency serving a small population, Lake County ETA (Employment and Training Administration) has the advantage of being able to give JTPA clients individual attention. Being close to a major metropolitan area offers the further advantage of linkage with a large school system. The SDA contracts with Lakeland Community College and Willoughby-Eastlake City Schools for training. It also furnishes JTPA counselors who work in the schools to break down barriers between JTPA clients and the training system.

Being able to pay that extra attention, to pick up a phone and talk to someone who knows the client, makes all the difference for his clients, many of whom have multiple barriers to employment, the director believes. He credits the schools for being "JTPA-sensitive" and the JTPA counselors for giving "some real good custody" that overcomes the odds the trainees face. Communication between the JTPA and instructional staffs, at the level of people who actually work with the clients, is responsible for the high degree of cooperation. But the

schools offer some programs in employment areas where adjacent Cleveland, the dominant job market, has a surplus. JTPA steers clients away from those programs. "There is no reason for us to waste this client's time unless we have a job commitment up front," the director says. "That at least gives you better odds."

A quarter of metro area's eight percent funds go to dropout prevention. Lucas County PIC, which administers JTPA programs for Lucas and Wood counties, splits its eight percent funds 25:75 between JOG dropout prevention programs in the high schools and training grants to vocational schools and technical colleges. Encompassing the Toledo metropolitan area and being on the Michigan-Ohio line puts the SDA within reach of as many as 20 educational institutions. The emphasis is on long-term training, because "in most cases, today's job market demands higher skills, which translates into longer training," the director explains. "There may be a couple of exceptions, like truck driving, but in general, the quick six-week courses no longer work. You need one or two years of school to really possess long-term employment skills."

TWENTY PERCENT OF THE EIGHTY PERCENT FOR TRANSITION

Twenty percent of the eighty percent goes to four state departments—Mental Health (DMH), Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD), Youth Services (DYS), and Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC)—to help institutionalized persons return to the world of work.

MRDD job coaches serve as on-the-job mentors. Since 1987, MRDD has put eight percent funding into its Job Coach program. Job Coach uses the supported-employment model, providing the handicapped client with a "job coach" who goes to the job site and trains the individual until he or she has learned sufficient skills to keep the job and is working up to company standards. Currently, the project is functioning under four grants in Wood, Hancock, Delaware, and Athens counties. In many cases, local JTPA SDAs have picked up and continued Job Coach with local funding, though MRDD officials worry that too few local employment training officials really appreciate how well supported employment works.

DYS Re-Entry Program uses adult ex-offenders to guide released youths. The DYS Re-Entry Program makes a social contribution on three levels by enlisting released youthful felons in community service under the mentorship of adult ex-offenders. The supportive re-education program teaches them what it feels like to be a victim of crime and gives them a "total indoctrination to our culture that they have missed in growing up," says a department coordinator. A typical placement might be in an elder-care facility or an inner-city housing project, where the youths are paid a stipend to run errands, help with cleaning, and do other needed services. Their ex-offender mentors, having "been there" themselves, are hard for the street-smart youngsters to "con." These are "serious, hard-core delinquents," the coordinator emphasizes, who have been abused, grown up in the streets, lack schooling, and suffer from many social ills. Re-Entry may re-educate and socialize these youths so that they can function in other training programs.

There are five Re-Entry programs statewide, serving a total of 62 released youths with $150,000 in eight percent funds. Local funding sources pay most of the cost. In Cleveland, for instance, Re-Entry is contracted to the Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries, whose eight percent allocation is $41,000—only a fraction of the program cost. The rest comes from local government and private foundation sources.

MH's Work-Able pioneered supported employment. Five years ago, two Mental Health Department officials responsible for institution-to-community transition pondered how to get their clients employed. They came up with a model that combines training, placement, and ongoing support. MH eight percent funds go to three psychiatric hospitals, which contract with local Goodwill agencies to provide supported employment to patients on the threshold of discharge (six months before and after). One of these programs, Work-Able, operated by Akron Goodwill Industries, has won national honors.[27] Working with Western Reserve Psychiatric Hospital, Sagamore Hills, and Cleveland Psychiatric Institute, Work-Able last year placed 27 individuals in competitive jobs.

The process starts with assessment of the client, followed by a client-to-job match and a broad base of supportive services provided by both hospital and Goodwill staff for 60 days after the person is placed. Supportive services can range from child care, to transportation, clothes, and tools, and to putting the person in touch with the mental health center.

State officials say the job coach makes a critical difference by helping the employer and employee in their relationship-building process. There's no doubt about the program's success as measured by community tenure. Ninety-one percent of the people Work-Able has assisted have stayed out of the hospital at least 90 days. By comparison, Western Reserve Psychiatric Hospital found that 90 percent of their dischargees were returning to the hospital in 30 days. Another measure of success is that ongoing support for all three program sites (all major cities) is coming out of local mental health boards' budgets, say MH officials.

ODRC's Pathfinder House offers furloughed inmates a place to live while learning skills. The two-story frame house at 624 S. Main St., Lima, offers women inmates in Ohio's correctional system a chance at a better life through learning construction rehab skills. Women on furlough from the state's three women's correctional facilities live at Pathfinder House while they work for Lima Rehab Project, a private, nonprofit community development corporation rehabing housing in an aging neighborhood. Eight percent funds pay the women a stipend of $50 a week during their stay.

Pathfinder women walk to the work site at 8 o'clock and spend a 40-hour week tearing off old roofing, framing the structure, insulating, re-roofing, putting up drywall, doing finish work, landscaping—all the operations involved in residential rehab. Their instructors are local trades-people paid by Community Development Block Grant money. At home, besides keeping their furlough house, the women study for their GED, learn to fill out job applications, and handle job interviews. Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings are available.

Pathfinder opened in 1988. In Program Year 1989 it housed 60 women for an average stay of three to four months, and it had a 72.2 percent positive termination rate; of the 36 who finished the program, 26 were placed in jobs or apprenticeships with an average wage of $4.98 an hour. Not all those placed went into construction jobs, but the high placement rate demonstrates that the program teaches work ethic and self esteem as well as construction skills, an ODRC official points out.

ODRC's ONOW gives women a head start on nontraditional employment. Now in its third year is an eight percent-funded ONOW program at Franklin Pre-Release Center, one of the state's three facilities for incarcerated women. ONOW prepares women for apprenticeship opportunities or entry-level jobs in construction, manufacturing, and technical service trades. Four eight-week classes with 20 openings each are offered per year. The instructor, who formerly taught ONOW classes at the Ohio Reformatory for Women at Marysville, follows up her students for three months after their release, six months if they're employed.

One former Marysville inmate seized the opportunities presented by both ONOW and Lima Rehab to learn carpentry. After her release, she applied for an apprenticeship slot at the Cincinnati Carpenters' local. Based on their skill test, the union gave her a year and a half credit toward her apprenticeship for the skills she'd learned through ONOW and Lima Rehab. Now in her fourth year of apprenticeship, this woman has excellent prospects of becoming a journey carpenter.

TWENTY PERCENT FOR COORDINATION

Twenty percent of the eight percent total is for coordination and is allocated in response to RFPs. Used as seed money, these funds promote teamwork and lead to creative and innovative ways of furthering training for employment, in the hope that successful projects will be repeated, continued, or replicated with dollars from other sources.

Computer links streamline operations for county welfare, OBES, JTPA offices and training institutions. The Central Ohio Rural Consortium (CORC, the Licking County JTPA SDA) collaborated with the county Department of Human Services, the joint vocational school, and the Central Ohio Technical College to design what may be the first computer network linking county welfare, JTPA, and training institutions. A grant of eight percent funds paid for multi-agency training and staff development as well as a feasibility study for a multi-user, remote-location, interactive computer system that would allow for a common data base to be used by the various service providers. The system will piggyback on a multi-tasking, multi-station network already set up in the human services department. Since all the service providers are located in the county seat, local phone lines will link them to the human services main data base.

The CORC director explains that his agency will have real-time, on-line access to so much information about welfare clients that he can probably waive the JTPA application interview. CORC will receive referrals and enroll clients electronically. Inquiries about an individual's status or progress can be made from any of the agencies' terminals. "We hope to eliminate 80 to 90 percent of the paper informational exchange between the agencies," the director says, sparing taxpayers' pockets, agencies' time, and clients the aggravation of being asked the same questions over and over.

JOG makes graduates, job-holders out of at-risk kids. Probably the most extensive effort resulting from the investment of eight percent coordination and linkage funds is Jobs for Ohio's Graduates (JOG), a school-to-work transition program for at-risk high school seniors that operates through local nonprofit corporations in conjunction with local school districts. In school year 1990–91, JOG served 3,400 seniors in 80 schools in 47 districts. JOG is patterned after JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates), a national program started about 12 years ago in the state of Delaware and expanded nationwide with Ford Foundation money.

Its growth in Ohio goes back to 1982 with a pilot JOG in Cincinnati. By school year 1986–87, it was decided to carry the program to 28 schools in the eight urban cities, funded entirely with eight percent funds. The second year, JOG served 1,904 students in 35 schools in 12 districts. Administrative costs were still paid from eight percent coordination funds. At that point, the program became a line item in the state Department of Education budget. Today, the state provides about 40 percent of the funds, and local sources furnish the balance.

JOG identifies at-risk students in the bottom quartile of their class; teaches them a 30-competency-based curriculum of employability, job readiness, and job keeping skills; and involves them in competitive activities in a career organization patterned after the vocational student organizations. It also helps them find jobs upon graudation and follows them for nine months after graduation.

The success rate is impressive. Over 90 percent of JOG students graduate. Of the Class of '89 JOG graduates, 82 percent were in "positive situations" (jobs, the military, college, other training) nine months later. Of the 183 nongraduates, half were still in school, at work, or working on a GED.

Vocational education was an answer to truancy; eight percent funds helped expand it. Six years ago, a Clermont County juvenile court judge wondered what to do about truants. If he sent them back to the schools where they were truant, they wound up back in his court. An assistant superintendent of Great Oaks Career Development Campus suggested a solution: Mainstream the truants into regular vocational programs, but have a coordinator on campus who would touch base with them on a daily basis, conduct some sessions with them on behavior modification, and serve as liaison between school and court.

The worst truants had been in school only 15 days out of the whole school year. Now their attendance was up to 94 percent. They left school with vocational certificates, some with diplomas, some with GEDs. The program succeeded so well that the assistant superintendent

applied for an eight percent grant to start a similar program in Hamilton County. Though it was considerably more difficult to set up in a large urban setting with a jammed juvenile court docket, the program, now JTPA-funded and in its second year, serves 75 to 80 students. JTPA funding has been promised for another year. Meanwhile, the original Clermont County program continues with funding from the schools and special needs funds from the state.

Cincinnati welfare focus groups indicate desire for more "soft" services. Welfare recipients had always made up about 50 percent of the JTPA clients of Cincinnati's Employment and Training Division. But administrators realized that proportion was climbing. The clientele had changed; the labor market had changed; and the economy was going into a downswing. Furthermore, welfare-to-work would soon be mandatory. It was time to make some changes. So JTPA borrowed a tactic from the marketing world.

An eight percent grant paid for a consultant to bring together 80 people in 10 focus groups representing various demographic combinations. Some had been in JTPA and other training programs; all were or had been on welfare. The JTPA administrators thought the focus groups would give them a better idea of what they wanted to be trained in. What they found was that their clients really wanted more "soft" services: counseling, people to listen, more career guidance.[28] "They really wanted to be treated with respect," the study coordinator says.

"When you look at why people do not succeed in the world of work, it's very, very seldom the lack of 'hard' skills to do the job; it's their *affective* behavior problems, their personal problems. Usually people opt to do the hard services because they give you the results, but there comes a point in time where people don't stay around long enough to give you the results if you don't respond to their other needs."

The Employment and Training Division and the Ohio Works Program (OWP, the people responsible for implementing welfare-to-work in Cincinnati) are responding in innovative ways. OWP is going into the community to register people and to try to reduce the bureaucratic hurdles to training. JTPA has added peer support groups, classes in health, housing, functional subjects like how to contract for services. Training and welfare staff have done some cross-training together, learning about motivating welfare clients and about their job retention problems.

"We're expecting that the long-term outcome will be that the individuals will stay and complete our programs and be more successful on the job," the study coordinator says.

Cleveland's LINK set out to give at-risk teen girls some options besides pregnancy, but it produced some surprises. In the 1987–88 school year, some 200 Cleveland teens were part of an eight-week life planning project designed to get them excited about the idea that they have career and other options in their lives besides becoming parents. These were 14- to 17-year-olds, both boys and girls, identified as being at risk of early parenthood through their own family backgrounds, academic performance, and other predisposing conditions.

They were encouraged to talk about the pressure to be sexually active, to identify some career areas that interested them, and to chart some goals for themselves. The project designers, WomenSpace, did attitude assessments before and after the eight-week project and, according to the WomenSpace executive director, found "dramatic changes in attitudes around the issue of early parenthood."

"We were surprised, but pleasantly so," she says. One of the surprises was the pressure that young men said they felt *from girls* to be sexually active. Another was that they felt a sense of responsibility for the consequences. A third was that these youngsters were not hard to reach. "Many for the first time felt like somebody was paying attention to them." They had suffered from a total lack of attention and of good role models.

LINK (not an acronym—the name refers to linking life choices to the job sector and the world at large) has been continued by a number of school systems and social service agencies in the Cleveland area and has been replicated in other Ohio cities.

HANDUP focused JTPA and OWA resources on a mutual target—at-risk students. The Ohio Department of Education Division of Vocational and Career Education, OWA (Occupational Work Adjustment) serves some 12,000 14- and 15-year-old students who are experiencing difficulty in school. SDAs can assist this at-risk group by directing funds to such activities as summer work programs, remediation units in basic academic subjects, computer programs and other materials to individualize instruction, afternoon employment, field trips, and speakers on career exploration.

Project HANDUP (Helping Adolescents Needing Direction Unlimited Partnership) began with eight percent funds in 1987 as an awareness and grantsmanship effort, bringing OWA school personnel and JTPA staff members together to get acquainted and to share information on services for this mutual clientele: at-risk 14- and 15-year-olds. Then followed a series of regional sessions to help OWA administrators write proposals to their local SDAs for funding for tutors, computers, summer training, or other aids. Mini-grants of $200 to $1000 were given as incentives and rewards to those OWA programs that did link with an SDA, the money to be used for curriculum materials.

OWA programs that established relationships with their local SDA have continued to make application on a yearly basis, the project coordinator reports. Another product is an OWA/JTPA linkage guide that lists a dozen samples of OWA programs that have linked with their JTPA counterparts, with contact names and phone numbers.

Other grants support literacy programs, tech-prep planning, alternatives for displaced clerical workers. Other eight percent-funded linkage and coordination projects address a wide range of training-for-employment problems and solutions. A drop-in homework center that helps youth with literacy problems, upgrading for displaced clerical workers, and articulation planning between high schools and colleges that heretofore "haven't spoken to each other" are some outcomes of projects and studies underwritten by these grants.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In setting aside eight percent of JTPA funds, Congress applied funding and specific wording to an objective that theretofore had only been hoped for and implied: cooperation and coordination among the various agencies with a role in training for employment.

How well does this "carrot for coordination" do what it was intended to do? In Ohio, quite well. This report tells of instances in which eight percent funds were used imaginatively to focus on problems of various JTPA-eligible populations; in each case, more than one agency or service was involved.

How could it fulfill its intended purpose better? The literature is replete with suggestions, many of them for **the federal government's doing less, or at least no more, than it is doing now,** especially in the way of rules and requirements. Brustein's whole book is a plea for simplication to enable training administrators to do their jobs without a law degree:

> The federal legal framework governing expenditure of funds under the Vocational Education Act and JTPA is so voluminous and cumbersome that a law library is required just to keep abreast of the evolving law.[29]

Grubb et al. sound a similar note:

> [I]n our view, the coordination regulations currently included in the Perkins Act and JTPA legislation . . . have gone about as far as they can, and additional regulations such as sign-off requirements, required meetings, and joint planning exercises would not have much effect.[30]

Grubb's retort to the criticism that eight percent money is often used as a "slush fund" is that if Congress intended specific uses then it should have been more explicit about its intent.

> If . . . Congress wants these funds to be used to foster stronger institutional relationships [it should] require that states and the Department of Labor collect information about successful models of coordination funded by this set-aside to share with other programs.[31]

In his second annual report on vocational education/JTPA coordination, Morgan Lewis publishes a list of **recommendations from JTPA administrators to vocational educators on how they could enhance the partnership:**

1. Improve communications; keep the SDA informed about programs; have joint meetings.
2. Do more joint planning.
3. Be more responsive to labor market needs; upgrade and update programs; put more emphasis on placement of JTPA participants.
4. Be more flexible and responsive to the needs of JTPA; offer more short-term and open-entry/open-exit programs; be less defensive.
5. Become better informed about JTPA.
6. Fund programs jointly.
7. Accept performance-based contracts.
8. Serve those outside the normal school population.[32]

The research for this report offered additional food for thought -- and possible action.

Some problems have solutions embedded in them. A Mental Health Department administrator worries that too few JTPA officials realize how well the supported -employment model works. **This calls for an invitation for JTPA people to join MH and Goodwill representatives in a day of visits to work sites where job coaches are helping clients learn and keep their jobs.**

In Cincinnati, Employment and Training officials notice shifts in the demographics of their clientele as well as the job market and the economy, and wonder how to make their programs more responsive. They look for the answer among the people who should know best -- their clients -- using a market research tool, the focus group.

There is serendipity in unexpected findings. Some of the coordination and linkage projects produced unexpected results. **These should be explored, not discarded.** The Cincinnati focus groups surprised administrators when they told them not what they (the welfare mothers) wanted to learn but how they wanted to be treated. The Employment and Training Division and the welfare department responded by trying to incorporate more "soft" services.

The LINK project was targeted to teenage girls at risk of becoming teenage mothers, but it included boys, too. The boys produced the surprises: they participated eagerly, they talked freely about sexual pressures that girls put on them, and they acknowledged they felt responsible for the consequences of their sexual activities. This unlooked-for response suggests other possible projects involving boys in goal-setting, career options, mentoring other at-risk boys, and not becoming fathers or (for those who do) demonstrating a sense of responsibility.

"Bottom-line" people are the ones who need to relate. Previously published studies are full of recommendations for more joint meetings, fewer joint meetings, and other advice about formal agency interaction. But conversations with those in the field make it clear that the people who most need to relate to their counterparts in other agencies are the people who actually work with the clients — the "bottom-line" people, as one JTPA administrator called them. **Where programs work well, it seems to be partly because instructors, case workers, and placement officers have sympathetic understanding of each others' goals as well as for the multi-disadvantaged JTPA client.** They also have administrators who give them enough autonomy to do what they are in the best position to know should be done.

Don't fund redundancy. One of the model projects was a study that identified office automation as the cause of clerical displacement. The study was reported in January 1988, so presumably the research was done in the preceding year. **By 1987 it did not take a study to tell that office automation was displacing clerical workers.** It had been going on for more than a decade. Though the study attracted additional grants to fund curricula and programs for the displaced workers, it seems likely that these efforts toward a solution were delayed by the original effort to identify a problem that was already obvious.

The same study raised questions about how well projects are monitored. Three years after the final report's publication date, the researcher had left his post for another state, but the grantee organization's executive director, who had been there during the project period, claimed to have no recollection of the project.

In conclusion, while the occasional project may "fall through the cracks," or become a victim of turf wars, or operate in isolation, **the overall impression is of sincere, systematic, and creative efforts to use eight percent funds for their intended purpose: to foster cooperation among agencies serving those who need training for employment.**

As for the appearance of duplication, **it will be always with us.** No one could say it better than Grubb:

> [A]s long as the current system falls short of the ideal, then a sense of incoherence and fragmentation will persist — not because coordination and collaboration are inadequate, but because the services available are themselves insufficient for the task at hand. . . .
>
> These problems and paradoxes fall most heavily on the shoulders of those who operate local work-related education and training programs, who must juggle urgent but contradictory demands with dwindling resources under mounting pressure to accomplish small miracles.[33]

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